

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 0648/11
Theory 11

Key messages

On the whole, candidates performed well on questions requiring simple, straightforward answers.

Careful note should be taken of introductory words and sentences in the stem of the question as these establish the type of information required in the response.

Candidates should be encouraged to give reasons, explanations and examples in questions that award more credit.

It is important that comprehension of technical words related to Food and Nutrition such as function, symptom, source and nutritional are reinforced so that candidates are able to clearly understand what is required from questions.

Candidates should be reminded to read questions carefully so that when a question asks for different food sources they do not name three green vegetables or three dairy foods.

General comments

Most scripts were easy to decipher. Some candidates need to be reminded of the necessity to write clearly for exams.

It was encouraging to note that the majority of candidates attempted every question.

Most candidates were able to complete the whole paper in the time provided.

Candidates should be careful of repeating the same point twice in an answer.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This was generally not answered well. It was expected that candidates state malnutrition as an unbalanced diet where there was a lack or excess of one or more nutrients.

Question 2

The majority of candidates were able to correctly name two B-group vitamins.

Question 3

- (a) The majority of candidates knew that the body needs iron to produce haemoglobin in red blood cells.
- (b) The majority of candidates knew that the red blood cells help carry oxygen around the body to muscles.

- (c) The majority of candidates knew that a deficiency of iron can lead to the medical condition anaemia.

Question 4

The majority of candidates were able to give one example of a process carried out by the body that uses electrical energy.

Question 5

The majority of candidates knew that the role of the mouth in digestion is to physically break down food by chewing.

Question 6

- (a) Few candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of the function of potassium in the body. Many responses were vague and not specific enough to achieve the marks.
- (b) Many candidates were able to gain at least one mark for naming a good source of potassium. Very few candidates were awarded full marks.

Question 7

- (a) It was generally well known that night-blindness is prevented by vitamin A.
- (b) Most candidates were able to name at least one good plant source of food containing vitamin A. Some candidates listed animal sources or named three green vegetables so were unable to obtain the available marks.

Question 8

- (a) Many candidates were able to gain at least three marks for reasons why proteins are essential to life. The most popular correct responses were growth, repair and maintenance. Some candidates were able to state that proteins are used in the manufacture of antibodies, enzymes and hormones.
- (b) Many candidates correctly identified pepsin as the enzyme in gastric juice that starts the digestion of proteins in meat.
- (c) A good proportion of candidates scored at least two marks. Correct answers referred to protein coagulating, meat shrinking, meat becoming tender and flesh changing colour. Many candidates used technical language to clearly describe the changes that take place.

Question 9

- (a) A good proportion of candidates were able to correctly name monounsaturated as the type of fat that contains only one double bond.
- (b) Many candidates were able to correctly name a food that is a good source of monounsaturated fat. The most popular correct answers were avocado and olive oil.

Question 10

- (a) Many candidates showed good knowledge and understanding of different health problems that could be caused by obesity. Correct answers ranged from mobility issues, heart disease and high blood pressure to low self-esteem and high cholesterol levels.
- (b) It was generally not well known about the effects of type 2 diabetes. Many candidates repeated their answers used in (a) so could not be credited for their responses.

Question 11

Many candidates omitted an explanation for their statements about points to consider when planning and preparing a packed lunch, and so could not achieve full marks. Many candidates gave answers referring to nutritional aspects of planning so could not be awarded marks. Correct responses addressed areas of colour, texture, flavour, portion size, risk of food poisoning and weather conditions.

Section B

Question 12

- (a) It was generally well known that egg and milk are the ingredients in the recipe containing high biological value (HBV) protein.
- (b) It was generally not well known that air or steam is the main raising agent in a batter.
- (c) A good proportion of candidates demonstrated their knowledge of ingredients that could be used with egg to make a coating to be used when frying food. The most popular correct responses were flour and breadcrumb. Some candidates correctly named breakfast cereal or pastry.
- (d) A high proportion of candidates correctly identified functions of the batter when frying fish. Correct answers referred to colour, texture, flavour, maintaining the integrity of the fish and preventing loss of moisture during the cooking process.
- (e) Most candidates achieved at least two marks for naming different garnishes suitable for serving with fried fish in batter. Responses referring to sauces, chips or a vegetable such as peas were not credited as these are accompaniments not garnishes.
- (f) Very few candidates achieved marks for this question. Many answers referred to general points when buying electrical equipment such as budget, manufacturer or colour to fit in with kitchen aesthetics which were not credit worthy. Others spoke about general points when using electrical equipment such as not placing the fryer near water, not filling it too full with oil or food, and being aware of young children in the vicinity which, although correct, received no marks as this was not asked for in the question.

Question 13

- (a) A good proportion of candidates demonstrated their knowledge of methods of treating cow's milk to prevent souring. The most popular responses were pasteurisation, sterilisation and condensation.
- (b) Many candidates showed good knowledge and understanding regarding storage of fresh cow's milk in the home with a wide variety of responses.
- (c) A high proportion of candidates were able to gain full marks by correctly identifying different milk products suitable for someone who is lactose intolerant. Responses that simply stated lactose-free milk lacked the detail required to gain a mark.

Question 14

- (a) Very few candidates were able to explain the ways consumers benefit from the addition of preservatives. Many candidates confused flavourings, colourings and other additives with preservatives, so could not be credited for their explanations. Correct responses tended to focus mainly on extending shelf life and preventing food from spoiling.
- (b) Many candidates gained both available marks by showing good knowledge of ingredients that may be used to preserve food in the home.

Question 15

- (a) Most candidates were able to achieve a good proportion of the available marks by providing factors to consider when choosing kitchen work surfaces. The most popular responses focused on ease of cleaning, aesthetics, ability of the surface to withstand high temperature and durability. Some candidates gave answers related to planning a new kitchen or positioning of work areas, which did not gain credit.
- (b) It was encouraging to see that many candidates were aware of different types of materials that could be used for kitchen work surfaces. The most popular responses were ceramic, granite, marble and stainless steel.

Section C

Question 16

This question was an equally popular choice. Some candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the nutrients contained in meat and poultry and showed their understanding of the function of the nutrients within the body. Some candidates limited their selection of nutrients contained in meat and poultry and some omitted specifying functions of the nutrients they named, and so limited the available marks that could have been awarded. In the second section of the question many candidates gave good reasons for cooking meat but needed to extend their answers with explanations, and so could not achieve full marks. Those candidates who showed both knowledge and understanding by providing explanations, reasons and examples in their answers gained more marks.

Question 17

This question was an equally popular choice. Some candidates incorrectly referred to takeaway foods which are not classed as convenience foods. Those candidates who structured their answer well and included precise, relevant, well discussed answers achieved better marks.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 0648/12 Theory

Key messages

Candidates should be reminded to read questions carefully so that when a question asks for different food sources they do not name three green vegetables or three dairy foods.

It is important that comprehension of technical words related to Food and Nutrition such as function, symptom, source and nutritional are reinforced so that candidates are able to clearly understand what is required from questions.

Candidates should be encouraged to give reasons, explanations and examples in questions that award more credit. It is important that candidates select appropriate information and tailor their answers to the questions set.

It is important that candidates read the questions carefully and ensure they include the required number of points to achieve all marks.

General comments

The shorter, factual questions were generally answered well. Centres should make sure that candidates are fully prepared for the exam by ensuring information is fully understood so that appropriate facts and explanations can be applied to given situations. Candidates should only include information relevant to the question and avoid stating all of the information they could recall on a topic.

It was encouraging to see a number of candidates had drafted a plan to help construct a good evaluation for the longer response questions. This should continue to be encouraged by centres as it strengthens the candidate's ability to focus on the key words.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The majority of candidates correctly named a balanced diet as the term used to describe a diet that contains all nutrients in the correct proportion.

Question 2

- (a) Some candidates correctly gave potassium as a mineral that helps to reduce blood pressure. Many candidates incorrectly stated iron.
- (b) The majority of candidates achieved marks for this question, demonstrating their knowledge of herbs that can be used for flavouring savoury dishes. Many candidates attained all four marks available. The most popular correct responses were basil, oregano, parsley, thyme and bay leaves. Some candidates incorrectly named garlic, cumin, mixed herbs and Italian herbs.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were able to correctly name at least one disaccharide, and many achieved the full marks available.
- (b) Many candidates correctly described the effects of moist heat on sugar. The most popular correct responses were sugar melts, sugar changes colour or goes brown, and sugar caramelises. Some candidates gave the incorrect responses crystallisation, gelatinisation and dextrinization. Some responses omitted that the prolonged heating would cause the sugar to burn so were not awarded a mark.

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates attempted this question. This question was generally not answered well as many candidates incorrectly stated unsaturated fat in their response. Other incorrect responses included many variations of fat types.
- (b) Candidates who had correctly named saturated fat in (a) were often able to gain at least two marks showing their knowledge of sources of this type of fat. As the question asked for different sources of the fat type, candidates who named three dairy foods or three types of meat were unable to achieve all available marks.
- (c) Many candidates were able to give the correct response of bile as the substance that emulsifies fat. Some candidates incorrectly referred to lipase.

Question 5

- (a) Many candidates knew that vitamin B₂ helps release energy from carbohydrates, is important for normal growth and helps the immune system.
- (b) It was well known that dermatitis, swollen tongue, fatigue and retarded growth are problems caused by a deficiency of vitamin B₂. Most candidates achieved at least one mark, and some were awarded all three marks.

Question 6

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to correctly identify scurvy as the deficiency disease caused by a poor supply of vitamin C.
- (b) The majority of candidates attempted this question. Most candidates achieved at least one mark. Many answers referred to information on buying, storing, preparing and serving cabbage which received no marks as this was not asked for in the question. The most popular correct guidelines were to not boil cabbage, use a small amount of water, to not overcook cabbage and either steam or stir fry cabbage. Many candidates omitted an explanation for the identified guideline and often just repeated part of the question that vitamin C would be lost, so could not achieve full marks.

Question 7

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to achieve the available mark by showing understanding of the need for lactating women to drink lots of water. The most popular correct responses referred to preventing dehydration or to keep hydrated. Some candidates were able to state that water helps produce milk for the baby.
- (b) Few candidates knew that lactating women are advised to eat no more than two portions of oily fish per week as it can contain low levels of pollutants, such as mercury, that can build up in the body and may be passed to the baby in breast milk. Incorrect responses referred to the fat or vitamin A content and the effects that these could have. Many responses were generic with no reference to the lactating mother. Many candidates stated that a pregnant woman should not eat too much fish as it would harm the foetus, showing some confusion between pregnant and lactating.

- (c) This question was quite well answered with reference to the development of the baby's bones and teeth frequently seen. Some candidates correctly mentioned osteoporosis or rickets. Many responses were in general terms and omitted specifically referencing the lactating mother.
- (d) It was generally well known that the need for a diet rich in iron is for the prevention of anaemia or to produce red blood cells. Some responses referred to the lactating mother's menstrual cycle returning so needing more iron to replace blood lost which was not credit worthy. Very few candidates made reference to the baby needing iron.
- (e) Most candidates were aware that vitamin D helps with the absorption of calcium. Some answers correctly referred to preventing the mother from suffering from osteoporosis in later life or preventing the baby developing rickets.
- (f) The majority of responses were too vague to achieve the mark. Many candidates stated that the extra kcal provided the mother with enough energy to do her work or provided extra energy for the baby, neither of which were credit worthy. Very few candidates gave the correct response.
- (g) The majority of candidates identified fibre as helping to prevent constipation. Very few referenced this as a particular problem in a woman after birth and during lactation. Some candidates incorrectly stated that fibre is a source of energy and nutrients.
- (h) This was generally not well answered. A high proportion of candidates provided generic responses such as checking for allergy issues, the amount of fat, sugar and salt in the product, or the sell by date which were not credit worthy. A few candidates gave a vague answer about checking to see if there is anything harmful or toxic in the product which was not specific enough to achieve the marks.

Section B

Question 8

- (a) A high proportion of candidates were not aware that the butter in the recipe provides the most energy.
- (b) The majority of candidates achieved the allocated two marks. The most popular responses were the addition of fruit, essences, zest, cocoa powder and chocolate to the mixture. Some candidates incorrectly referred to the addition of a topping to the cake or the use of various forms for frosting and so could not be credited for their responses.
- (c) The majority of candidates attempted the question. Few candidates had the knowledge of the appropriate method process and use of correct equipment to achieve all the available six marks.
- (d) It was encouraging to note that a good proportion of candidates correctly identified egg as the ingredient in the mixture that causes coagulation to occur during baking.
- (e) A good proportion of candidates correctly identified flour as the ingredient in the mixture that causes dextrinisation to occur during baking.
- (f) A high proportion of candidates achieved one of the available marks for this question. The Maillard reaction was generally not a well-known process.
- (g) A high proportion of candidates achieved one of the available marks for this question by referencing the colour of the cake. It was generally not well known about the effects of the Maillard reaction.
- (h) The majority of candidates achieved the available mark.

- (i) Many candidates were able to achieve at least one mark. Very few candidates achieved the full four marks available. Candidates need to have the precise knowledge regarding reasons for cakes having a close, heavy texture after baking. The most popular correct responses included the mixture not being creamed enough, the cake not being cooked for long enough or the oven door being opened too often during the baking process. Candidates who referred to over-mixing needed to state 'when adding flour' to achieve the mark. Answers referring to the ingredients used being too much or too little could not gain credit as the quantities had been given in the question.
- (j) This was generally not well answered. Some candidates gave the expected correct response of the wire rack allowing air to circulate, or steam to escape to prevent the cake being soggy. Incorrect responses included the cake not burning the kitchen unit, the rack preventing the cake falling apart, and the wire rack absorbing the heat as it was metal.
- (k) The majority of candidates demonstrated knowledge of keeping cakes wrapped or in a covered container in a cool, dry place so gained the available marks. Responses indicating storage in a fridge could not be awarded a mark as this would dry them out too rapidly rather than keeping them in a good condition.

Question 9

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to give the correct response of the Jewish religion being associated with eating kosher food.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to give the correct response of the Christian or Catholic religion being associated with eating fish on Friday.
- (c) It was well known that fasting during Ramadan is associated with Islam.

Question 10

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to correctly identify a mineral found in seaweed. The most popular responses were iron, iodide and sodium.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to correctly identify vitamin B, or a named vitamin within the group, as the vitamin found in rice.
- (c) This question was generally not answered well. Some candidates were able to achieve one mark as they referenced the high moisture content of the rice. Many candidates incorrectly referred to the rice not being washed properly before cooking, the water for growing or washing the rice being contaminated or the rice not being cooked enough and so could not achieve the marks.
- (d) It was generally not well understood about the correct storage temperature needed to prevent food poisoning. A wide range of incorrect temperatures were seen from minus temperatures to high temperatures as well as references to keeping the sushi in the refrigerator with no temperature included. Some candidates identified the correct storage temperature with many responses using a range to achieve the mark.
- (e) A high proportion of candidates were able to correctly identify three shellfish that can be used to make sushi. Candidates that referred to fish as one of the responses, tuna and salmon being the most popular, could not achieve all marks.

Question 11

- (a) It was quite well known that warmth and moisture are required for yeast to ferment. Some candidates gave time and food which are also correct. Candidates who simply stated temperature or water lacked detail to achieve the available marks.
- (b) The majority of candidates showed their knowledge of raising agents by correctly identifying carbon dioxide as the gas yeast produces during the process of fermentation.

Question 12

- (a) Many candidates achieved full marks for this question.
- (b) Most candidates were awarded at least two marks. The most popular correct responses included lightweight, durable, cheap, recyclable and able to be moulded to different shapes. Some candidates also included responses that referred to the generic use of packaging which, although correct, were not asked for by the question.

Section C

Question 13

This question was an equally popular choice. Those candidates who structured their answer well and included precise, relevant, well discussed responses achieved better marks. Some candidates simply wrote information on the function of fats, types of fats and health implications of eating saturated fat and could not achieve many marks. The ways of reducing saturated fat intake was reasonably well answered. Some candidates referred to fat rather than saturated fat when providing a reason. Some responses omitted a reason, for example, stating you need to cut off visible fat from meat but omitting that by doing so greatly reduced the saturated fat content. Stronger candidates showed both knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the whole question by providing explanations, reasons and examples in their answers.

Question 14

This question was an equally popular choice. It was well known that the two main causes of this health problem are lack of fibre and water. Some candidates also recognised the part that pregnancy, lack of exercise and excess consumption of some foods play in being constipated. Some candidates incorrectly named other nutrients or reasons for constipation which were not credit worthy. The ways of modifying family meals to help minimise the risk of developing constipation was reasonably well answered. Some candidates omitted an explanation for their suggestions thus limiting the marks that could be awarded. Some responses referred to increasing fruit in meals but then omitted to mention that fruit, especially eaten with the skin, provides a good supply of fibre and water needed to prevent constipation, and so reduced the mark that could be awarded. Those candidates who structured their essay well and included precise, relevant, well discussed answers achieved better marks.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 0648/13
Theory 13

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- (a) Most candidates were able to achieve a good proportion of the available marks by providing factors to consider when choosing kitchen work surfaces. The most popular responses focused on ease of cleaning, aesthetics, ability of the surface to withstand high temperature and durability. Some candidates gave answers related to planning a new kitchen or positioning of work areas, which did not gain credit.
- (b) It was encouraging to see that many candidates were aware of different types of materials that could be used for kitchen work surfaces. The most popular responses were ceramic, granite, marble and stainless steel.

Section C

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This question was an equally popular choice. Some candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the nutrients contained in meat and poultry and showed their understanding of the function of the nutrients within the body. Some candidates limited their selection of nutrients contained in meat and poultry and some omitted specifying functions of the nutrients they named, and so limited the available marks that could have been awarded. In the second section of the question many candidates gave good reasons for cooking meat but needed to extend their answers with explanations, and so could not achieve full marks. Those candidates who showed both knowledge and understanding by providing explanations, reasons and examples in their answers gained more marks.

Question 17

This question was an equally popular choice. Some candidates incorrectly referred to takeaway foods which are not classed as convenience foods. Those candidates who structured their answer well and included precise, relevant, well discussed answers achieved better marks.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 0648/02 Practical
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Key messages

- The inclusion of photographs as supporting evidence is now being received routinely. Centres should ensure that all dishes are not obscured by table decorations, labels or coverings so that they are clearly visible and that candidates do not appear in the picture. Only one clear, hard copy showing all of the final dishes is required.
- Examiners should refer to the Practical Test Handbook, available from the School Support Hub, to ensure that the mark scheme is accurately, rigorously and consistently applied across the cohort. All Examiners should refresh their knowledge of the instructions and mark scheme regularly. Marks awarded must reflect the comments given on the Examiner marksheets and the annotations on candidates' planning sheets.
- All centres must use the Confidential Instructions for the specific series being examined as these may vary from year to year. Additionally, centres should ensure they follow the guidance that the published tests are to be allocated to candidates in strict alphabetical order (by surname). Test numbers (not syllabus number) along with full candidate and centre details are to be included on planning sheets and mark sheets.
- For each examination series, centres should download and use the most recent forms. These are available as interactive summary mark sheets and working mark sheets that will automatically total the marks and scale correctly. Many centres are using this system effectively now.
- All centres must complete and include the Practical Examiner's Report and checklist with the candidates' work. This can be found in the Confidential Instructions document. It includes a record of the dates when the planning and practical tests were carried out, a seating plan and the opportunity for the teacher to report any difficulties that may have occurred during the Test.

General comments

Many centres presented work of a good standard and submitted interesting and varied work which meets the assessment criteria. In a few centres, candidates chose low-skill dishes or dishes that did not meet the requirements of the assessment.

Candidates generally need more guidance and practice with interpreting given assignments and menu planning. This will enable them to accurately answer the demands of the test allocated whilst demonstrating sufficient skills in using a wide range of ingredients, manipulation of various mixtures, knowledge of consistencies and different cooking methods and making full and sensible use of the oven, grill and the top of the cooker.

Candidates need to be able to apply their theoretical knowledge of nutritional requirements for specific groups. Many candidates demonstrated that they did not fully understand the requirements of a 'balanced meal'. Candidates should be taught how to select suitable dishes for a range of nutritional requirements so that during the planning session they instinctively know how to plan a suitable balanced meal. Centres are reminded that candidates should produce a range of dishes that would normally be served together in the same meal; dishes should complement each other.

Centres are reminded that only one set of A4-size only preparation sheets should be issued to each candidate, with a maximum of two sets used. Marks must be reduced by 2 where candidates use more than two sets. Preparation sheets should be fastened together with staples or treasury tags in the correct order, along with the photographs. Most centres are now using the interactive form to make scaling accurate but some of those that are still handwriting marks make errors in scaling.

Most examiners provided detailed annotation on the front sheets and within the work. There were several examples of good practice when examiners commented on a) how dishes met the test requirements b) how well the work was planned with reference to dovetailing skills, sequencing skills, use of appropriate methods and accurate detail in the special points column c) the practical and organisational skills demonstrated during the practical test and d) the taste/texture and appearance of the final results with reference to the word bank in the Handbook. Good practice was also seen when examiners indicated on the work where and how they were allocating marks. For example, on the recipe sheet examiners recorded a mark out of 4 for each dish chosen as well as a mark out of 5 for the ingredients listed. Also, time plans were marked using the recommended abbreviations (DT, W, M, SQ etc.). This enabled moderators to give more accurate and consistent advice in the report to centres. It is a requirement that all candidates' work must show evidence of marking, with annotation clearly written on the work to evidence how and where marks have been awarded.

Planning should include brief but accurate details of preparation and cooking methods, cooking times and oven temperatures. Candidates should indicate in the Special Points column how they will test that each item of food or recipe is cooked – for example they should state that a sponge cake would be baked until 'golden brown and springy to touch', pasta 'cooked until al dente'. There were many good examples of 'dovetailing'. This is a complex skill that allows candidates to show how, while one dish is cooking, another is being prepared or decorated. Candidates should use dovetailing to demonstrate the efficient use of time and to allow them to make dishes of a higher skill level within the time allowed; and where dovetailing is not evident, the maximum mark available for the Time Plan is five marks. Time left at the end of a plan indicates a lack of skill in the dishes chosen or errors in timing for other processes. Some of the plans were written over too many pages. The maximum should be two and any extras should mean that marks are adjusted as it is an indication of too much detail being put into the time plans. Time plans should indicate sufficient work to fill 150 minutes.

The marks for the method of working and the final results sections were often a little generous considering the number of incorrect or low skill dishes, or dishes that were not produced at all. Where this is the case the total number of marks in each section should be reduced. Low-skilled dishes; or repeated main ingredients, skills and methods, or incorrect choices affect the marks for choices, method of working and final results. Some tests demonstrated a limited variety of skills, often with too much similar vegetable preparation. Closer attention to the syllabus would be beneficial and would enable the candidates to achieve higher marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This required a balanced main meal for people with coeliac disease. There were many suitable menus planned for this and the best choices included gluten-free dishes based on rice or potato. Most candidates were able to provide a meal that was well-balanced with a range of nutrients. A few candidates did not understand the question and so they made dishes that contained gluten. Some meals were imbalanced as they were too high in carbohydrate with both potato and rice being used as accompaniments instead of including more colourful nutrient-rich green, red and orange vegetables. Candidates should also bear in mind they must indicate all ingredients are gluten-free, such as gluten-free stocks, sauces or any other ready-made components used in the meals.

For **(b)**, there were many good examples of neatly filled and decorated sponge cakes, Genoise sponges and Swiss rolls as a whisking method cake, and correct choices were made for the batch of scones. Candidates must make sure they understand and use the correct method. The use of an electric mixer to make a creaming method recipe or all-in-one cake is not the same as a whisking method cake. Some well-risen, golden scones were produced, with a variety of sweet and savoury adaptations.

Question 2

This question required three skilful dishes, each to show a different cooking method. Most candidates were able to choose skilful dishes that used relevant cooking methods. Boiling, shallow frying and steaming were most popular. Dishes chosen included spaghetti bolognese and chicken alfredo (boiling), fish cakes and pancakes with filling and sauces for shallow frying, steamed sponge, or steamed fish and steamed vegetables which were then incorporated into a main dish. For steaming some candidates chose a single food (such as a green vegetable or fish fillets) rather than using the method to prepare one part of a skilled dish (e.g. using steaming to make fish pie). Marks were reduced in these instances as the question required

'skilful dishes'. Some candidates chose a dish that required deep fat frying instead of shallow frying e.g. scotch eggs. This should have been marked as a wrong choice.

For **(b)**, pizza or Chelsea buns were popular choices, although some candidates made bread rolls which are classed as an accompaniment, not a skilful dish. Where these were imaginatively and skilfully filled, they presented as a better choice. Small cakes were more popular than tray bakes, although several good examples of chocolate brownies were seen. All cakes, large and small must be neatly decorated to gain full marks.

A small minority of examiners awarded marks for large cakes. These should have been awarded 0 marks as they were an incorrect choice.

Question 3

This proved to be a challenge for candidates. A few good candidates were able to choose low calorie dishes (avoiding too much carbohydrate and fat) that were also highly skilled. These candidates showed their knowledge of reducing calories through making adaptations to recipes. For example, by using semi-skimmed milk in a sauce, by using wholemeal flour to increase the fibre in bread rolls and by making use of pulses alongside smaller quantities of meat in dishes such as spaghetti Bolognese. Accompaniments such as salads with a small amount of home-made vinaigrette dressing were also popular. Good candidates also considered portion sizes and reduced these in order to reduce calories.

Some candidates were able to identify low calorie dishes and chose cooking methods that were suitable for weight loss. For example, grilled chicken and steamed fish. However, these choices lacked skills and so marks were deducted for this. Several candidates showed little understanding of weight loss. They made dishes that were high in fat and carbohydrate and then served large portions that would have been high in calories.

For **(b)**, good choices were dishes which incorporated oats or oatmeal into the recipes, for example, apple and oat crumble with custard, flapjacks with additional ingredients (chopped nuts, seeds and dried fruit) and oatmeal gingerbread or oat biscuits. A few candidates made oatmeal bowl, granola or porridge which used just three ingredients and was simple to make. The cake made by the creaming method was generally accurately chosen and was decorated to increase the skills shown.

When a question states 'make a cake using the creaming method' it is expected that candidates will make a large cake, not small cupcakes or fairy cakes. These should be marked as a wrong choice.

Question 4

This required dishes suitable for teenagers to take for a packed meal and specified that they should be suitable for eating cold. Most candidates made good choices that included sausage rolls, cheese straws, mini quiches, rice or quinoa salads, scones, homemade bread rolls filled with tuna fish and homemade mayonnaise, cookies and cupcakes. Candidates were able to show their knowledge of a balanced meal by including salads such as coleslaw with homemade mayonnaise dressing or by including salad in their homemade bread rolls. Some candidates chose dishes that could not be eaten cold. Soups (unless candidates state that they have chosen a chilled soup recipe) and beefburgers, for example, should have been marked as wrong choices. Some candidates served their dishes in appropriate containers to make transportation easier. These should be displayed open so the food can be clearly seen in photographs.

For **(b)** the most popular skilled choices included lasagne and pasta bake using a variety of vegetables and a roux cheese sauce. Dish using fresh fruit was well chosen with fruit flan, fruit tart, apple pie and lemon drizzle cake popular skilled choices.

In this test we did see a number of repeats of cheese in recipes for both **(a)** and **(b)**, which meant a reduction of marks for those candidates.

Question 5

This required five skilful dishes suitable for a 10-year old's party. Most candidates showed their knowledge of party food that would appeal to children. Popular dishes were fish or chicken in batter with sauces or dips and salad garnishes, mini pizza, sausage rolls, biscuits and fruit tartlets. Candidates were able to demonstrate their skills in producing some skilfully decorated cakes that would appeal to children. Also, some well-arranged and thoughtfully presented tables suitable for the theme of a party were seen. Most

chose a good balance of savoury (3 or more) and sweet dishes (no more than 2) across the test. Savoury dishes chosen tended to be high in carbohydrates and fats with little consideration of including colourful vegetables and fruit to add balance and improve appearance.

Question 6

In **(a)** candidates demonstrated their understanding of the dietary needs of pregnant women. Dishes chosen included good sources of calcium (cheese, milk) and iron (pulses, green leafy vegetables, red meat). Vegetable soup and wholemeal bread rolls were popular starters. Macaroni cheese, spinach quiche, chicken alfredo, shepherd's pie and spaghetti Bolognese were popular savoury main dishes. Fruit tart (using fresh fruit and egg custard filling) was popular as a dessert. There was some evidence of understanding of the component parts that make up a balanced meal (range of taste/textures/colours as well as nutrients); however, meals were not always balanced. Some candidates struggled to include accompaniments such as salads with dressings, and a range of vegetables to provide essential vitamins and minerals as well as adding colour to the meal.

For **(b)**, many were well chosen with ginger, cinnamon and vanilla being the most popular spices used. Good practice was seen when the candidate clearly specified the spice used in the dish. Cinnamon spirals, spicy fruit crumble with nutmeg sauce, ginger cake, fruit cake (with nutmeg and cinnamon) and vanilla sponge were popular choices. The spice used should be specified and clearly identifiable in the list of ingredients.

Some very appealing and interesting savoury muffins were produced. These were well-chosen to include extra skills in terms of preparation and balance of additional ingredients. Cheese and bacon muffins were most popular. Some chose savoury *scones* instead of muffins, which were a wrong choice.

Question 7

We saw generally good choices for **(a)**, showing knowledge of HBV protein. Most popular sources were chicken, beef and fish. Egg, cheese, quorn and soya products (such as TVP or tofu) were also acceptable.

For **(b)**, many candidates chose cold sweet dishes which used gelatine. Good examples were cheesecake, lemon mousse, and fruit flans. Other dishes that required setting included fruit custard that needed to be chilled in order to become firm, and chocolate cake with a ganache that needed to set.

The hot dessert was answered well. Apple crumble, fruit pie and steamed sponge pudding were popular. Many candidates served custard with the crumble and steamed sponge to increase the skills in the dish. Some candidates made small cakes rather than a hot dessert. Some examiners awarded full marks within choice for a hot dessert even when it did not include custard to increase the skills in the dish. Several candidates made chocolate brownies that were served cold and these were incorrect choices, although examiners tended to mark them as correct.

Question 8

In **(a)** most candidates demonstrated their understanding of vegetarian diets and dietary needs. We saw much interesting and imaginative use of a variety of vegetables and pulses. Popular dishes included macaroni cheese, spinach quiche, vegetable lasagne. Most candidates chose suitable accompaniments to balance the meal along with a suitable starter or dessert.

In **part b**, dishes for coating batter were well chosen and included battered fried fish or chicken as popular choices. These needed to be served with a sauce, dip or salsa to increase the skill level. A few candidates chose dishes that used a pouring batter instead of a coating batter e.g. pancakes. In some cases, candidates used a breadcrumb coating instead of a batter, and examiners need to check carefully that what the candidate plans in the Choice section accurately meets the test requirements. Too often these types of errors are unrecognised by the examiner.

A sweet dish to show use of a piping bag produced many excellent choices including eclairs, lemon meringue pie with piped meringue, piped Viennese biscuits and skilfully decorated large and small sponge cakes using piped buttercream or whipped cream.

One candidate made a cake which was covered in whipped cream but did not include any piping. This was awarded 0 marks as it was a wrong choice.